

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي

Ministère de L'enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique

ⵓⵎⵓⵍⵓⵔ ⵎⵓⵎⵎⵉⵔⵉ ⵔⵉⵣⵉⵓⵣⵓ
ⵕⵓⵏⵉⵙⵏⵉ ⵔⵉⵣⵉⵓⵣⵓ
ⵕⵓⵏⵉⵙⵏⵉ ⵔⵉⵣⵉⵓⵣⵓ

UNIVERSITE MOULOU D MAMMERRI DE TIZI-OUZOU
FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES
DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS

جامعة مولود معمري – تيزي وزو
كلية الآداب و اللغات
قسم اللغة الانجليزية

Domaine : Lettres et langues.
Filière : Langue anglaise.
Spécialité : Arts dramatiques et lettres
anglaises.



Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master in English

Title:

Women's Withheld Subjectivity in Elichi Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966) and
Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* (2007)

Presented by:

Kenza Sadou
Nassima Kadi

Supervised by:

Dr. Arezki KHELIFA

Broad of Examiners:

Chair: Miss. Ghalia BEDRANI, MCA, Department of English.

Examiner: Mr. Mohamed Larbi LAOUARI, MAB, Department of English.

Supervisor: Dr. Arezki KHELIFA, MCB, Department of English.

N° d'ordre :

N° de série:

Promotion: November, 2017

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our great thankfulness to our supervisor Dr KHELIFA for his guidance, encouragement, and precious advice along this production.

We are also grateful to all teachers of the English department without forgetting the members of the jury who accepted to examine our work.

Dedications

This work would be dedicated to:

My dear father who has done his best to see me in this level, and my mother that I really love

My lovely brother MOHAMED who supported me along my life

My uncles, my aunts and cousins namely: DYHIA, RYMA, and TINA

My adorable binomial NASSIMA who is as a sister that I never had

My best friend HANANE

All persons that I appreciate especially: LAMIA, LILLIA, and KOKA.

My future husband

With all my love

KENZA

I would dedicate this dissertation to:

My parents who are my motivation of living with all my love

*My dear brothers: SAID, SIDALI, YANIS and especially BRAHIM to whom I wish
recovery*

my lovely nephews ILES and SILYA

My sister in law YAMINA and my amiable cousin FADHILA

*My sister that I never had, my binomial KENZA who supported me with kindness as well
as to her respectable family*

My best friends, TASSADIT, LAMIA, LILLIA, KOKA, and Momoh

All my classmates, especially BRAHIM, LYES and FERHAT

With all my love

NASSIMA

Contents

- Acknowledgements.....	i
- Dedications.....	ii
- Contents.....	iv
- Abstract.....	vi
General Introduction	1
- Endnotes.....	6
Background chapter	8
1-Method.....	8
a- Summary of <i>A Vindication of The Rights of Woman</i>	8
2- Materials.....	11
a- Short Biography of Elichi Amadi.....	11
b- The Summary of <i>The Concubine</i>	11
c- Short biography of Lynn Nottage.....	12
d- The Summary of <i>Ruined</i>	13
e- Historical Background.....	13
a- Nigeria 1966.....	13
b- Civil War of Congo.....	14
- Endnotes.....	15
Results	17
Discussion	19
Chapter one: the Response to the Masculine Power.....	19
- End notes.....	29
Chapter two: Women’s Rights to Equality.....	31
1- Education.....	31
2- Reformation of Female Manners.....	39

- End notes.....	46
General conclusion.....	48
Bibliography.....	50

Abstract

This research paper aims at comparing women's withheld subjectivity in two African works namely Eliche Amadi's The Concubine (1966) and Lynn Nottage's Ruined (2007). We have selected Mary Wollstonecraft's feminist theory as explained in her essay A Vindication of the Rights of Woman since some of its concepts suit to the subject treated. Within the novel and the play, the matter of women's subordination is clearly demonstrated where the authors depicted the way women have been dominated by the harsh government led by men with the strict rules of the patriarchal societies. The first chapter is an attempt to prove how women resist and react to the cultural and masculine system of thought and literature and to the way women try to emancipate their identity, a vigorous action to challenge the power of men. In the second chapter, we have selected the theme of women's right for equality which would be realized through education and the rejection of emotions by using rational thoughts as a solution to abolish the battle of gender discrimination.

General Introduction

This master dissertation tends to examine the issue of gender differences in the African world. Many women are victims of exploitation because their culture demands that they have to be submissive. They continue to be used by men who have more authority than they do; so that, they are unable to think about their own paths and make decisions since the patriarchal system of society provides men with more power. In fact, women's identity is withheld by the hands of society in general and of men in particular. Our work is concerned with the withheld subjectivity of women in the African society mainly in Nigeria and The Congo as stated in the works of Eliche Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966) and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* (2007).

Through the present research paper, we will discuss women in state of subordination, the society's control over female members through tradition including domination, discrimination, and sexual violence. Our study is connected with the African women during two different periods of time starting from the 1966 to 2007 knowing that patriarchy is their social system in which women are regarded as secondary and as created for men's desires.

The two works are concerned with the real life of the African women who viewed as the weaker sex and the most suffering beings of their times. *The Concubine* is one of the significant novels that depicts the obedience of the Nigerian women to the measures of the traditional society they belong to. Besides *Ruined* is another key work that illustrates how the Congolese women resist the horrible violence directed at them in wartimes.

Our purpose of this dissertation is to show how the two authors present the situation of the African woman who seeks for emancipation to break away from traditional practices that oppress her, and to liberate from practices that aim at using her body as a source of pleasure to

man; therefore, we have supposed a comparative study concerning the situation of the African women between these two African works namely Elichi Amadi's *The Concubine* and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*.

To review, in the very beginning of human history, severity towards women and inequality were due to religious thoughts such as man is superior over woman because man is the first creation of god. Feminists' goal, then, is to awaken and save women from the unfair society and patriarchal system imposed on them. To end the exercise of man's authority, feminism appeared against women's "inferiority". As a movement, it emerged in the 18th century, seeking to liberate them from the submissive social, religious and political conditions. Indeed, many feminist writers contributed to prevent gender discrimination and support the women's rights.

Among the spokespersons of the rights of women in the beginning of the eighteenth century, one can mention Mary Astell. The social conventions of her time constructed by man as the ruler and the governor in different areas of life led her to write about females' autonomy and equal education of her gender. "As a proto feminist, Astell oriented her discourse in a subtle way to challenge the authority of man and redefine the morals and the mores of marriage."¹ Therefore, she is an earliest English feminist that drew attention to the lack of women's choice upon marriage in her famous essay '*Some Reflection upon Marriage*' (1700). One of her opinion concerning this field is,

If all men born free, how is that all women are born slaves? As they must be is the being subjected to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of men be the perfect condition of slavery? And if the issue of freedom consists, as our masters say it does, in having a standing rule to live by? And why is slavery so condemn'd and stove against in one care, and so highly applauded and held so necessary and sacred one another?²

From the quotation above, we conclude that the matter of slavery is out of the question in marriage relationship since God created man and women as equal human beings; consequently, these creatures have the same natural rights in various aspects of life.

Then, as one of the defenders of the rights of women, Bell Hooks in *Feminism for Everybody*. For her, Feminism and the foundation of equality between man and woman will lead to the construction of community without racism, sexism, and imperialism. The feminist movement comes to realize the common social position of the two sexes to accept each other as equal human beings. She confirms that,

Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression. This was a definition of feminism I offered in feminist theory. From margin to center more than 10years ago, it was my hope at the time that it would become a common definition everyone would use. I liked this definition because it did not imply that men were the enemy. By naming sexism as the problem it went directly to the heart of the matter. it is a definition that implies all sexist thinking and action is the problem, whether those who perpetuate it are female or male, child or adult.³

As to the texts this dissertation will seek to analyze, it can be noticed that Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* is a key portrait of the Congolese women during the Civil War of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The play focuses on the survival of some women in a brothel in the Congo. It is considered as one of the best works that led Lynn Nottage to win 2009 Pulitzer Prize for drama. it is argued that *Ruined* is an adaptation in which "Nottage herself acknowledge that initially took Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children* as a model for her play: Brechet's story of exploitation and loose moral codes in the times of war seemed to be the right framework of the storyset in a small mining village in Democratic republic of Congo"⁴. thus, one can notice that the play can be a re-writing of Brecht's work (1939). Lynn Nottage was influenced by his ideas.

A critique is made by Carmen Mendez Garcia in her work *This Is my Place, Mama Nadi's: Feminine Spaces and Identity in Lynn Nottage's Ruined*. It is about the negative effects

on the victim's health after being raped, and the disability of reproducing after such ravishment; for her, *Ruined* is written to express the wounded heart of those women as she says,

Ruined as a text is keen on exploring feminine spaces and how external circumstances such as war and exploitation of the land can both affect and reflect inner spaces, commenting on what the feminine experience of life in the margins of society is in those abjects, not merely public, but not necessarily private (and therefore not completely safe) spaces.⁵

Another critique made by Friedman and it is quoted by Carmen Mendez Garcia concerning Lynn Nottage's play, "*Ruined* as a play strives to bring attention to sexual abuse, rape, survival sex and psychological violence toward women in countries ravaged by conquest and conflict between government and insurgent forces."⁶ For him, *Ruined* play portrays the way Congolese women are victimized sexually and even damaged psychologically.

As for Eliche Amadi's *The Concubine*, a critique is made by George D. Nymndi claiming that woman's image within the novel is associated with the Nigerian traditions that do not allow women to venture one step outside the social construction traced for her. Their actions are mainly checked by the masculine guilds and rituals casts.⁷ In fact, it is clear that this culture refers to male supremacy and female "inferiority". Thus, Women always follow the path of men in their destination.

In addition, as *The Concubine* is an African novel, some readers consider it as "an artistic portrayal of people's pre-colonial way of life against the background of the problem of young love and man's relation with gods"⁸. From this, it seems that Eliche Amadi creates a rural setting in which the traditional African society is explored. He probably focuses his attention on the way people are ruled by gods and the issue of young marriage.

From another view, *The Concubine* is considered as mythical novel since the African inhabitants center their beliefs on different types of Gods to whom they provide sacrifices to survive and recover from an illness or malediction; however, it can be also a realistic novel as it is mentioned in *Myths and Realities: A Study of Elichi Amadi's The Concubine* by Issac Messiah (2011: 120),

Even though Elichi Amadi's *The Concubine* seen as a mythical novel by notable some literary critics (.....) because of the prominence of gods in the novel, it can be examined as realistic novel. This because the heroine Ihuoma and the author major characters such as Emenike, Ekwueme and Madume are real names of persons in a real life situation.⁹

According to this critique, Elichi Amadi does not deal directly with the issue of women, but presents the lifestyle of the rural inhabitants and how they challenge the harsh obstacles to feed their families.

From the above review of literature, it appears that those critics have not already put the works, Lynn's Nottage's *Ruined* and Elichi Amadi's *The Concubine*, together under study but they have studied them separately. Until now, according to our knowledge, it seems that the previous studies did not study the two works from the perspective of feminism. In fact, this is the reason that leads us to discuss the issue of the African women in the two works; therefore, the aim of this research is to show the withheld subjectivity of women and how they overcome the injustice of men as well as of the African society. It is significant to mention that this dissertation is devoted to a comparison by applying Mary Wollstonecraft's essay *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Some of her concepts are relevant to our dissertation since *Ruined* and *The Concubine* may contain some of Wollstonecraft's thoughts about the rights of women. Even though the two works have been written during two different periods of time and read from different sights, this fact does not prevent them to share

common elements concerning the African women. Therefore, we propose a comparison to bring new sight on those women.

Concerning the methodological outline of this dissertation, it will be divided into sections. The first will be devoted to the general introduction in which we refer to the African women whose subjectivity and identity are withheld by the supremacy of men and the harsh society. It will also review some critiques about feminism in general, and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* and Elichi Amdi's *The Concubine* in particular. Then, the second section will be concerned with methods and materials where we introduce a brief summary of Mary Wollstonecraft's theory as explained in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Some biographical elements about the two authors, synopses of their works, and historical backgrounds will be included. Our 'Results' section will focus on the findings of our study whereas the 'Discussion' section will contain two chapters. In the first chapter we will analyze the female character according to Wollstonecraft's perspective replying to the masculine literature. In the second chapter we will study women's quest for equality by education and reformation in female manners. As for the conclusion, we will restate the main points explored in our piece of research.

Endnotes

1. Mohamed Gariti, *Feminism In Britain: From William Shakespere to Mary Wollstonecraft* (Tizi ousou: university of Mouloud Mammeri, 2012),150.
2. Mary Astell (1700) Some Reflection upon Marriage, accessed on Sptember 30, 2017. <http://faculty.goucher.edu/eng211/maryastel.htm>
3. Bell Hooks, *Feminism for Everybody* (Canada: Gloria Watkins, 2000), 1.
4. Carmen Mendez Garcia. *This is my Place, Mama Nadi's: Feminine Spaces and Identity in Lynn Nottage's Ruined* (Spain: university of Madrid, 2012) 234, Accessed on April 19, 2017. <http://eprints.ucm.es/32495/1/41141-55705-2-PB.pdf>.
5. Ibid
6. Ibid

7. George D. Nymndi, “ Elichi Amadi’s Women: Voices of Reason”, *Nordic Journal of African studies* 13, no.2(2004): 218, Accessed on June 13, 2017. www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol13num2/nyamndi.pdf
8. Victor O. Ogbeide, Cultural Innocence ,commitment and Education in Elichi Amadi’s *The Concubine and The Great Ponds* 5, no 1(2011): 30
9. Issac Messiah, “Myths and Realities: A Study of Elichi Amadi’s *The Concubine*”, *Journal of Humanistic and Social Studies* 2, No. 1(2011): 120, Accessed on September 10, 2017. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/messages/downloadsexceeded.html>.

Background chapter

In this chapter, we explore the main points related to the historical information starting by the method which includes the important concepts of Mary Wollstonecraft's theory as developed in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). Moreover, the materials' section includes the short biographies of Elichi Amadi and Lynn Nottage, and the summaries of the two works: *The Concubine* (1966) and *Ruined* (2007), and finally their historical backgrounds.

1- Method

a- Summary of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

Mary Wollstonecraft is a British feminist writer who made an attempt to defend woman's rights. She is known for her famous essay *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792 which is a reply to the masculine literatures presented by Jean Jacques Rousseau, Dr Gregory, and Edmund Burke who introduced man with the admiration for power while woman was associated with weakness and imperfection. Wollstonecraft examined the question of Rousseau who believes that woman ought to feel herself as an independent being which would be governed by fear and being a slave, a sweeter companion to man, whenever he chooses to relax himself.¹⁰ We may say that Rousseau see that man and woman are different, so man should be the master while woman is dependent to him and obeys his orders as a servant who feeds his satisfaction.

Dr Gregory also shared the same opinion as Rousseau about women. He claims that women must put a great emphasis on dressing and being pretty in appearance because a caress of beauty is the female world. The authoress maintains that "the worthy Dr Gregory fell into a

similar error. I respect his heart; but entirely disapprove of his celebrated Legacy to his daughters. He advises them to cultivate a fondness of dress, because a fondness of dress, his behavior asserts, is natural to them".¹¹ As a result, in a response to the males' thoughts, she reacted firmly about the intellectual weakness directed against her sex. Men made women dependent on them that manage females' thoughts, their behavior and even their education. She noticed that the lack of reason and subordination is exerted not because they are naturally incapable but because of the absence of education imposed on them.

Women's essential goal is the importance of their physical beauty and neglecting the notion of mind. "Pleasure is the business of woman's life, according to the present modification of society, and while it continues to be so, little can be expected from such weak beings;¹² however, it is not their mistake since they are socially constructed to think this way. The authoress states,

Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, everything else is needless, for, at least, twenty years of their lives.¹³

Women's destiny is limited to household chores such as to manage the house, bear children, and more than that, they were objects for men's needs emotionally and sexually. Meanwhile, Wollstonecraft portrayed women as reasonable beings by challenging such attitudes and achieving their emancipation. Hence, she advises females to stop focusing on their emotions and use their rational capacities.

Since ancient times, man was considered as the head of the house and the wife should accept her husband's orders as her master. In fact, women were oppressed by their fathers and once they got married they also underwent their husband's oppression. Wollstonecraft reacted

strongly against this type of marriage institution which made women as slaves. She aimed at freeing women from social construction, and seeking for equal status. Therefore, according to her, marriage should be based on friendship and mutual respect. It is worth to mention that Mary Wollstonecraft urges men to educate their wives to perform as important leaders in order to aid the growth of the next generation of thinkers and intellectuals. Women will be, then, good companions rather than tools that share the remaining of their lives as well as to keep away from the state of slavish dependency. Thus, woman deserves to get rights like man who should be the responsible to lead any female of his own either his daughter, sister or wife over fondness of reading

Mary Wollstonecraft was inspired by the ideas of enlightenment that led her to claim women's social, political and economic independence. She proposed non-gendered roles to be given for women as an opportunity to show their multiple talents. From her ideas, equal education of the two sexes would help women to build creative minds to integrate politics. Thus, to achieve freedom, women should be allowed to integrate political fields. Wollstonecraft states, "I shall not pursue this argument, any further than to establish an obvious inference, that sound politics diffuse liberty mankind, including women, will become more wise and virtuous".¹⁴

In addition, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* criticizes the way the images of women are constructed, for that, it sheds light on their ability to become entirely rational and free individuals. Mary Wollstonecraft requires men to grant their fellows' possibility to prove themselves with qualities of reason and independent thoughts. Hence, it is the ultimate time to improve women's skills through the reformation and revolution in their manners.

Wollstonecraft vindicates that “Women at present are by ignorance rendered foolish or vicious, is, I think, not to be disputed; and, that the most salutary effects tending to prove mankind might be expected from a REVOLUTION in female manners”.¹⁵ Through her book, Mary’s goal is to emancipate woman’s faith and strengthen her mind by occupying herself in educating, thinking of futures paths, and contributing in the economic and the political sides instead of wasting her time in keeping herself attractive and beautiful as they will become autonomous and partake in the public sphere.

2- Materials

a- Short Biography of Elichi Amadi:

Elichi Amadi was born in 1934 and died recently in 2016. He is one of the Nigerian novelists and playwrights whose works explore the African village life, traditions, and beliefs. He graduated from university of Ibadan with a degree of mathematics and physics; then, he served in the military army as a captain. He also worked for the ministry of information as well as a teacher at many schools as the Nigerian military school. His writings deal with the rural life of the African inhabitants and the role of the supernatural in Nigeria. Therefore, Amadi’s novels like *The Great Ponds* (1969) , *The Slave* (1978) that focus on the ordinary life and the religious rituals of his nation, and *The Concubine* (1966) as the “most accomplished first performance and “an outstanding work of pure fiction

b- The summary of *The Concubine*

The Concubine is first published in 1966 after a number of a great African literary Works. The novel takes place in West Africa so it portrays the way women are treated at that time especially the beautiful young woman Ihuoma, who is suddenly widowed by the death of

her husband Emenike. After that, Ekwueme, one of the villagers falls in love with this widow and wishes to marry her knowing that she has three children to bear. He attempted to confess his desires but she always refuses because of his childhood engagement. Ekwueme has to marry the girl to whom he has been engaged since birth whose name is Ahurole. His parents had promised Ahurole's family to take their girl as soon as she becomes mature; however, Ekwueme has chosen Ihuoma to be his wife. Traditional society does not allow such alliances for Ihuoma is a widow who should take care of her children and her husband's compound. When Ekwueme accepts to marry Ahurole, he discovers a childish girl who cries all the time. He still thinks of Ihuoma the beautiful and the reasonable woman whom he prefers. After his recovery from the love potion made by his wife, Ekwueme marries the desired woman whose son will kill him by accident.

c- Short Biography of Lynn Nottage

Lynn Nottage is an American playwright, associate professor of theatre at Columbia University, and a teacher in playwriting at school of drama. She was born in Brooklyn New York in 1964. After graduation from Brown University and the Yale school of Drama, Nottage took a position in Amnesty international's press for four years. Her works present the lives of African women and their struggles to gain their liberty. Her major plays include *Poof* (1993), *Intimate Apparel* (2003), and *Ruined* (2007) in which she won a Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2009. Then, she won 2016 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and gained another Pulitzer Prize for drama in 2017 for her finalist play *Sweat*. Consequently, she is considered a winner of Pulitzer Prize for drama twice.

d- The Summary of *Ruined*

Ruined is a two act play written by the African American writer Lynn Nottage in 2007. The play explores the women's hard situation during the civil war of the Congo. She focuses on human suffering caused by the war mainly the particular suffering of women who have been victims of rape and murder. Set in a small mining town in the Congo, Nottage's *Ruined* centers on Mama Nadi, a business woman who is trying to stay neutral in a world destroyed by civil war. The war has ravaged her country and especially the young girls who have been exploited by soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Mama Nadi takes damaged girls in to her brothel and profits from them, but also protects them from the brutality of the world outside. Amongst Mama Nadi's refugees are Josephine whose town was destroyed and who was raped by rebel soldiers; Salima who was taken by savage soldiers; they killed her baby and took her as a prisoner of war before making her pregnant; and Sophie, a young girl who has been ruined by sexual violence.

e- Historical Backgrounds

1- 1960's Nigeria

Nigeria is one of the largest African countries associated with strong beliefs and traditions. For that, Nigeria in the 1960's is seen as patriarchal society that enables men to dominate women. The latter play a major role in the traditional society; they still have fewer rights than men. Throughout history, the nature of male dominance is the main feature in the structure of social organization and institution at all levels of leadership activities whereas females are only limited to domestic activities. This culture affected most women in Nigeria by their position in society in relation to men. In addition to that, this patriarchal system limits

them and render them in the second position after their fellow gender as Mineke Schipper argues in *Women in African Literature Today*,

Why should men be more equal than women? It has to do with society's heritage of tradition and norms. Men often want for themselves the same authority in their homes as their fathers had an authority that was sanctioned by tradition and myths of the past. Young men want to marry virgins, and girls are given in marriage to the husband by fathers who do not have to ask their daughters' opinion. The women are expected to be faithful to their husband, but have no right to ask the same in return.¹⁶

As a result of these beliefs, women are deprived from their elementary rights and put in the category of "the other" which means that they are secondary and mostly not significant for the intellectual projects namely education. Those stereotypes imposed to women, in Nigeria or elsewhere, are the main prejudices that excluded them from the right of equality.

Another important issue is that most Nigerian people are organized and guided by their ancestors' myth which is the reason of traditional African attitudes toward women. The Nigerian society depends on the presence of God to judge women's destiny.

In myth, woman has been associated (by man?) With nature in two main senses, one positive and the other negative: as the life-giving mother figure and as the frightening, dangerous which has to be dominated or at least restricted by codes and norms. A number of myths explain how the existing hierarchical order was created and how it has been ever since- from the beginning. Looking at African creation myths woman, in the comparison with man, has often had to put up with secondary position.¹⁷

In this sense, women, in Africa, are dominated either by the supremacy of men adapted according to traditions or by the myths which are interpreted according to the community's restrictions.

2- Civil War in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo has achieved two great civil wars which affected millions of Congolese lives especially women. The offensive lack of respect has reduced them

objects and means of slavery. Indeed, during this period of time, women have been considered most victims of discrimination and violence. Because of their status as being weak beings, they suffered and were exploited even more than the male soldiers in these wars. Besides, rape was soldiers' tool to destroy, defeat and to cause fear to them. Most of the girls have been damaged, destructed, and ruined by sexual violence; they not only suffer from physical damage but also psychological chaos and disorder. Thus, many those harmed women were blamed for what has been done to them, refused by their families, as well as prohibited of matrimony. it is directed that Congo has the increased rate of rape all over the world; even old women are included in such sexual massacre. This has been also Lynn Nottage's personal impression after her pilgrimage to the Congo; she has asserted that:

Six years ago, I travelled to east Africa to interview Congolese women feeling the armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I was fuelled by ma desire to tell the story of war, but through the eyes of women who as we know rarely start conflict, but inevitably find themselves right smack in the middle of them. I was interested in giving voice and audience to African women living in the shadows of war.¹⁸

The playwright has demonstrated that the circumstances located in the Democratic Republic are complicated; hence, she decides to write about the war fought against women's bodies and identities.

End notes

10. Marry Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (New York: Penguin) 2, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
11. Ibid., 28.
12. Ibid., 58.
13. Ibid., 19.
14. Ibid., 38.
15. Ibid., 204.

16. Mineke Schipper, "Mother Africa on a Pedestal: the Male Heritage in African Literature and Criticism". In *Women in African Literature Today*, eds. Jones Eldred Durosimi, et al (UK: Lightning source UK Ltd, 2002):46.
17. *Ibid.*,37.
18. Lynn Nottage, *Ruined Study Guide*. (London: Almeida projects, 2010), 17.

Results

Throughout our comparative study between Elichi Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966) and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* (2007), we have come to deduce the miserable conditions of women in a patriarchal society. This investigation is centered on the theme of women's withheld subjectivity and the necessity of changing, to reform their behavior. To accomplish our aim, we have adopted some theoretical concepts in Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

In the first chapter, it has been proved that women had the capability to challenge the severe standards issued by society and man. Male-dominance system over women is commonly the structure shared in both: the Nigerian and the Congolese societies and this is portrayed in the two works. To respond to the masculine ethics, drawn from traditional laws, women ultimately attempted to transcend the accusation of being inutile through working. *The Concubine* and *Ruined* share this reaction of women against their fellow sex to be as efficient workers. Women suffered and were marginalized more in Nottage's play rather than in Amadi's novel.

In the second chapter, the way women endeavor for their right to equality has been of interest. We have started with the subject of education as the means of liberation from the cultural exploitation which hindered women's rights and used their bodies as objects of lust. The majority of girls have received house teaching that limited their knowledge to cunning, and house work. Being published at different epochs, *Ruined* portrays women who have more access to education than does *The Concubine*. Women ought to partake in the public sphere starting by education and warned against false sensibility.

All in all, this comparative study explored the position of women who underwent harsh and unfair masculine treatments but who struggled for more independence, equality and education. As a result, education is the light to end gender discrimination and society's control over women.

Discussion:

In the discussion, we will analyze the status of women as it is portrayed in Eliche Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966) and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* (2007) within two chapters. The first chapter includes women's response to the masculine power exerted upon them. Whereas, the second chapter deals with women's right to equality which contains the importance of education and knowledge acquisition to both sexes. It will also be concerned with reformation of female manners.

Chapter one: Response to Masculine Power

The Concubine is a work which exposes the reality of the Nigerian society during the 1960s and the 1970s. Male dominance was the pillar of their beliefs and attitudes where women were ignored. Within the novel, wives are limited only to their husband's orders and house management. Furthermore, myth is the major restriction of the community which most of the characters follow.

Ihuoma is the central character of this production. She is an attractive lady whose beauty attracts most of the villagers. As Eliche Amadi describes her, "She was sympathetic, gentle, and reserved. It was her husband's boast that in their six years of marriage she had never had any serious quarrel with another woman".¹⁹ He also shows the loyalty of the Nigerian woman by providing Ihuoma as a good example when he says that, "Ihuoma showed a great devotion to her husband in every way she could think of. She prepared dish after dish to tempt him."²⁰ In this sense, Amadi definitely depicts Ihuoma in a positive way through showing her human qualities either toward her husband or toward the inhabitants of her village.

Besides, Ihuoma as tragic heroine is a widow in her early age except that, “It was lucky she had three children and the farm to look after, she threw all her energies into them?”²¹ Her beauty draws an attention to the majority of men in Omokachi village, even Madume who is her husband enemy. To add, Ekwueme wants her knowing that he has been promised to someone else. Because of the traditional regulation, the widow women have no right to marry a young man who has never been married before. It was the case with Ihuoma who has been refused by Ekwueme’s family. Despite the fact that she finds many troubles in her widowhood, she is strong enough to resist rather than giving up claiming that,

Ihuoma was harvesting her coco yams alone. To fill up the silence she whistled and sang in turns. The whistling represented the music of xylophone and her singing the normal rejoinder of dancers. By this double operation she lulled herself into the feeling of being in a dance arena and her loneliness vanished.²²

When Emenike died, Ihuoma didn’t abandon the plantation; she instead gives all her energies to harvest plantain. She mostly carries out the work on farm as her husband did. Elichi writes that, “Ihuoma’s farm was in good shape, but it was much smaller than it had been. She had sold off a good proportion of her husband’s stocks.”²³ From that, we can indicate that women attempt to establish their lives without men’s support. Mary Wollstonecraft also tried to justify that they are actually not weak. Like men, they can use their physical and mental capacities in order to survive. Consequently, society ought to teach the next generation these truths to eliminate gender discrimination.

In *The Concubine*, we notice that many female characters call their husbands, “My lord” that means they are under men’s conduction. As regards this point, women have less importance than men, for they are denied and deprived so many things. They are usually dependent and placed in the second place after men. This is shown in the novel when Ihuoma is discussing with Ekwueme,

'You do not need to'.
 'Why not?'
 'You are a woman'.
 'Women are denied many things.'
 'List them.'
 'They are uncountable. Look, we are not allowed to climb trees, we may not eat the meat of the kite, the gizzard of a bird is also forbidden, we...'
 'Well, would you like to be in your next incarnation?'
 'No!'
 'There you are.'²⁴

Because of the male dominance and the unfair treatment of women as slaves, Mary Wollstonecraft 'opens herself up to criticism that she undermines the position of women she intends to defend'²⁵. That means, she is aware about her idea to vindicate the downhearted women even though her masterpiece would receive several critiques about the subject.

To illustrate what has been said, Ahurole, another female character displays underestimation because her father had promised Ekwueme's father about childhood engagement and her husband, Ekwueme, considers her as child with a childish comportment. He uses violence to render her mature. This is referred to in chapter twenty one,

Suddenly Ekwe get up and ordered her to get off in an awful voice. Before she could move he gave her several slaps on the face. Pushed her back violently. Ahurole felt flat on her back but sprang up with youthful elasticity and charged blindly at her husband.
 'You will kill me today, you must kill me today,' she cried and carries my body to my parents.²⁶

It is often known that man uses his force in order to show his physical strength through beating woman; however, it is not the wisest solution to fix gender limits. Thus, women should defend and react to the negative ways that man has traced for feminine-masculine rearrangement. Ihuoma is replying to Madume who tries to get her out of the land with a purpose of drawing near her:

'This is not yours, is it? Madume asked with a slight nervous ring in this voice which annoyed him.
 'I thought the elders had settled this land problem once and for all' Ihuoma replied, looking straight at him.

‘Who told you that?’
‘I don’t need to be told; I was there.’
‘It is not true. Put down the plantain.’
‘Why should I? It is mine, it is my husband’s.’²⁷

Consequently, Ihuoma tries to protect her husband’s land and herself from humiliation. Mainly she attempts to support her status as a woman showing her ability to defeat the injustice for self respect.

Even though Ihuoma is a person greatly admired in Omokachi village, Ekwueme’s family disagrees about her marriage with their son simply because she is widow that has some duties toward her compound, like taking care of her husband’s farm. Wigwe, Ekwueme’s father, and his son have gone to Ihuoma’s house unexpectedly at a late time of the night asserting,

‘Ihuoma,’ Wigwe resumed, ‘I have come to ask you to marry my son Ekweme. What do you say?’

Ekwueme looked up, his face lined with surprise. A moment later he realized his father was being supremely tactful. The irony of it all embittered him. Ihuoma saw the ruse immediately and was saddened at this play-acting at her own expense. Even a fool would not let his son take on a widow as a first wife. Did Wigwe think she was too naïve to see through that?

‘Dede,’ ihuoma replied steadily, ‘I thank you for this proposal. It is a good one, but I cannot accept it because I want to stay in my late husband’s compound and bring up his children to carry on his name. I hope Ekwe will not take it ill and that he will find a good girl to marry soon.’²⁸

Accordingly, Ekwueme and his father do not actually respect the traditional rules of their society by surprising such innocent woman at that late time knowing that she is alone at home without any man; however, Ihuoma responds cleverly to their tactful request. As a result, women are not irrational and weak beings as often some men consider them. They are intelligent enough to challenge men’s orders. Ihuoma, then, marginalizes her emotion and uses her reason or mainly her mind to the same way Mary Wollstonecraft replied to the masculine literature which claimed that men are more reasonable than women. Wollstonecraft

“subtly addresses inequality between the sexes within a male-dominated print culture using several rhetorical strategies: by making direct appeals to men. Challenging them to prove themselves reasonable and rational.”²⁹ Moreover, Wollstonecraft asserts in the famous essay *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792),

I still insists, that not only a virtue, but the knowledge of the two sexes should be the same nature, if not in degree, and that women, considered not only as moral; but rational creatures, ought to endeavor to acquire human virtues (or perfection) by the same means as men.³⁰

Conforming to the authoress insistence on women’s reason, Ihuoma is the main character who behaves in the right way using her mind before acting. For instance, despite the rejection of Ekwueme’s family, she does not hesitate to give a hand for them in Ekwueme’s illness after the love potion caused by Ahurole at the end of the novel,

While Mmam and Wakari kept Ekwueme company, Wige and his wife interviewed Ihuoma at her house at evening. “My daughter”, Wigwe began; we thank you for the great help you rendered us this afternoon. Many a woman would have hesitated over a situation like that, but you acted promptly and calmly as if you were his sister. Thank you my daughter. The gods will reward you.”
There is nothing to thank me for. It was a simple act which anyone might have performed. You do not know how sorry I feel to the whole thing. I wish I could help you even more.”³¹

Consequently, to make Ekwueme fond of his wife, Ahurole dares to make love potion which drives her husband mad. His behavior has been altered and transformed totally to another man. Thanks to Ihuoma who plays a prominent role in his recovery, Ekwueme get better from the poisonous drug. Even though the Dibia or the medicine man warns Ekwueme that Ihuoma belongs to the sea king which attacks any man approximates her, he insists on marrying that beautiful woman saying to his father:

I shall marry Ihuoma. She is a human being and if marrying a woman like her is a fatal mistake, I am prepared to make it. If I am her husband a day before my death, my soul will go singing happily to take spirit world.³²

Accidentally, Ekwume dies because of an arrow directed by Ihuoma eldest son Nwonna. He left family and his beloved who has been widowed for a second time.

To conclude what has been said above, Elichi Amadi created a work that depicts the situation of the African women particularly Ihuoma who suffers from loneliness after her husband's death and more than that, she is marginalized as being widow who has three children to bear. From our analysis, we may deduce that Amadi, with his positive description of Ihuoma, supports the female position in society. He seems to be against men's harsh treatments towards women.

As to Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*, it is a contemporary work which centers on the lives of women during the civil war of the Democratic Republic of Congo and their survival despite cruelty. The playwright depicts men's merciless treatment over women, knowing that Mama Nadi, the main character of the play, and the other female characters witnessed sexual violence, marginalization and forceful rape. In fact, *Ruined* characters were inspired from the real life of the Congolese women in which Nottage, during this war, realizes that rape has been a mean of exploitation. She confirms,

In 2004 I went to east Africa to collect the narratives of Congolese women, because I knew their stories weren't being heard. I had no idea what play I would find in that war-torn landscape, but I travelled to the region, because, I wanted to paint a three dimensional portrait of women caught in the middle of armed conflicts; I wanted to understand who were beyond their status as victimized.³³

Indeed, Mama Nadi is the subject of oppression since she experiences different ways of male dominance; however, she defeats man's power by managing a brothel where she conducts business alone. In the very beginning of the play, it seems that Christian tries to convince Mama to take in her bar women who were totally damaged; she agrees after a long negotiation about the price in order to run her business by making them prostitutes, and in return to provide such girls livelihood. This is apparent in her conversation,

Mama: how many?
Christian: Three.
Mama: Three? But, I can't use three rights now. You know that.
Christian: of course you can. And I will give you a good price if you take all them.
(Mama goes to the doorway, and peers out the offerings, unimpressed.)
Mama: I don't know. They look used; worn
Christian: c'mon, Mama. Take another look. A full look. You've said it yourself
business (Mama considers, then finally)
Mama: okay, one that's one in front (points into the distance)
Christian: three c'mon, don't make me travel back with them.
Mama: just one. How much?
Christian: do you know how difficult it was getting here? The road was completely
washed out.
Mama: all right, all right. I don't need the whole damn saga. Just tell me, how
much for the one.³⁴

Throughout the play, we notice that Mama Nadi is on one edge a symbol of goodness since she attempts to shelter the raped women from the dangerous environment outside namely a beautiful ruined girl Sophie and a plain raped girl Salima. On another edge, Mama profits from them through putting Sophie and Salima work inside the bar as she says: "I expect my girls to be well-behaved and clean, that's all. I provide a bed, food, and clothing. If things are good, everyone gets a little; if things are bad, then Mama eats first."³⁵

Accordingly, Mary Wollstonecraft emphasizes in the rights that should be given to women in order to respond to the masculine writers like Edmund Burke who characterizes man as the sublime with power whereas woman is considered as the weaker sex. To add, Rousseau and Dr Gregory "have contributed to render women more artificial, weaker characters, than they would otherwise have been, and, consequently, more useless members of society."³⁶ In fact, Wollstonecraft disagrees with these views and her attempts based on proving that women are not weak by nature but it is society and man who corrupted their capacities and reduced them to the lower levels. Thus, she struggles against the subordination of her sex to get equality inside the society.

From what is mentioned above, Mama Nadi, in *Ruined*, is a key illustration of a strong woman who desires the same position as man. To prove that, she is an excellent business woman who tends to accomplish her job in intelligent ways as she is a leader of an enormous bar where most of the soldiers get to obey her bar's rules. We refer to that through her conversation with commander Osembenga,

Osembenga: bring me a cold primus. A pack of cigarettes, fresh. (*Mama produces a chair for Osembenga, then she fishes into the cooler for a beer.*)

Mama: Monsieur, I must ask you to leave your bullets at the bar, otherwise you don't come in

Osembenga: And if I choose not to. (*Mama holds the cold beer in her hand*)

Mama: then you don't get served. I don't want any mischief in here. Is that clear? (*Osembenga is charmed by her tenacity. He laughs with robust authority of a man in charge.*)

Osembenga: do you know who I am?

Mama: I'm afraid you must edify me. And then forgive me, if it makes absolutely no difference. Once you step through my door, then you're in my house. And I make the rules here. (*Osembenga laughs again*)³⁷

It is significant that the protagonist tries to respond to the cruelty of society affected by the war. Despite her troubled past, she is arrogant, majestic and a manager of a big bar. Therefore, in order to help the violated women to survive, she keeps them in her space even if she has some benefits from them claiming that, "My girls...they'd rather be here, than back out there in their villagers where they are taken without regard. They'd safer with me, than in their own homes".³⁸ One day, with audacity, she intercedes between Sophie and Commander Osembenga when this latter dares to hit her because of the decline to his temptation to charm her. Sophie courageously ventures to spit on his feet; she shows a firm face in challenging the huge monster, but with more brave Mama assays to protect her from the perilous punishment. It is referred in this conversation,

OSEMBENGA. (Smiling, Osembenga pulls Sophie on to his lap.)
 Hey we are talking. We are talking yeah? (Osembenga gently runs his hand up her leg.) Jolie fille! Je connais pas votre nom (pretty girl! I do not know your name.) (Sophie tenses. Osembenga moves his hand up her skirt. Sophie gasps and struggles harder.)
 SOPHIE (Hisses) let go of me! (Sophie pushes away, shocked, from Osembenga. Christian rushes into protect her, as Osembenga lunges for her. Mama blocks him. Laurent rushes to aid Osembenga.)
 MAMA. Sophie, shush! Enough. Commander, ignore her, there are other girls for you. Come. Come.
 OSEMBENGA. Bring this around back, my men will teach her a lesson. She needs proper schooling. (Laurent shoves Christian out way and grabs Sophie. This is the first time we've seen Mama scared. Sophie spits on Osembenga's feet.)
 MAMA. Sophie. (Mama, horrified bends down and wipes the spit from Osembenga's shoes. Osembenga glares at Sophie. She shouts as if possessed.)
 SOPHIE. I am dead! Shetani! (Satan) Fuck a corpse! What would that make you? Osembenga is thrown. Christian quickly pulls Sophie away.)
 OSEMBENGA. I'm trying to bring order here, and girl spits on my feet. You see, this is what I have to deal with. This is the problem.
 MAMA. Gentlemen, commander, this is not our way ...we want to be comfortable and happy here, let me show you the pleasures of Mama Nadi's(A moment standoff)³⁹

Mama tries to turn aside the soldiers from having sex with the innocent girl since it would be ultimately painful, then, when the commander insists on Sophie, in anger and fear, she insults him by spitting on him.

Besides, Wollstonecraft, “opposes against the argument women are sentimental rather rational.”⁴⁰ We understand that women ought not follow their feelings and let their sentiments and emotions destruct their existence. In fact, they must use their minds in order to get their rights. In *Ruined*, Mama Nadi does not believe in love and romance, because simply she is tenacious and uses logic instead. She says,

CHRITIAN: Maybe. But damn it against my better judgments ...I love you.
 MAMA: Love. What's the point in all this shit? Love is too fragile a sentiment for out here. Think about what happens to the things we “love”. It isn't worth it. Love. It is a poisonous word. It will cost us more than it returns. Don't you think? It'll be an unnecessary burden for people like us. And it'll eventually strangle us!⁴¹

She also says to Sophie, “You read too many of those romance novels where everything is forgiven with a kiss.”⁴² And this is the reply she gives to Josephine as regards feelings and emotions,

JOSEPHINE: you don't care for romance, Mama?

MAMA: Me? No, the problem is I already know how it's going to end. There'll be kissing, fucking, a betrayal, and then the woman will foolishly surrender her heart to an undeserving man.⁴³

Because of men's physical strength, women are considered vulnerable and subordinate. This is what Wollstonecraft admitted in her book in which she seeks for equality. She disregards the idea of man's authority over woman and she thinks that women's weakness is due to the wrong cultural construction of the society. Wollstonecraft argues that, “This physical superiority cannot be denied- And it is a noble prerogative! But not content with natural pre-eminence men endeavor to sink us still lower, merely to render us alluring objects for a moment.”⁴⁴ Therefore, women must not be as tools for men but rather have the same position as them as it is the case in *Ruined*.

Apart from Mama Nadi, many other female characters are identified as victims of rape and objects to the soldiers in the war. They are rejected by their families and by their societies because of the sexual violence. The African society where they belong is patriarchal, so man is the dominant and woman is the exploited. For example Salima, one of Mama Nadi's prostitutes, is considered as a concubine attacked by military men who raped her and kept her as their slave; consequently, her husband has rejected her, and more than that she has been exiled from her village. Sophie is another harmed woman who suffers from a terrible violence by militia. She has been ruined in a horrible manner through a bayonet; thus, she is genitally damaged as it is shown in the play:

CHRISTIAN: Salima is from a tiny village. No place really. She was captured by rebel soldiers, Mayi-mayi; the poor thing spent nearly five months in the bush as their concubine.

MAMA: and what of her people?

CHRISTIAN: she says her husband is a farmer, and from what I understand, her village won't her back. Because... she is a simple girl, she doesn't have much learning, I wouldn't worry about her.

MAMA: and the other

CHRISTIAN: Sophie. Sophie is....

MAMA: is what

CHRITIAN: ... is... ruined. (A moment)⁴⁵

Finally, Mama Nadi and the female characters of the play are harmed beings through a sexual assault as well as they are seen as objects of violation and pleasure for the rebel soldiers. Mama Nadi as the rescuer of these weak girls challenges the domination of man by giving them a means for survival. She is the only strong female character who struggles for her rights to be independent without the need of man. It significant to mention that both, *The Concubine* and *Ruined*, which have been discussed above explore the miserable life of the African women as well as the way they combat to live in tranquility.

End notes

19. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 11.
20. Ibid., 7.
21. Ibid., 36.
22. Ibid., 149.
23. Ibid., 30.
24. Ibid., 84.
25. Michelle Le Doeuff, *The Annual Marry Wollstonecraft Public Lecture: Marry In The Twenty First Century* (UK: University of The Hull, 2017), 11.
26. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 142.
27. Ibid. P.64
28. Ibid. P. 113
29. Michelle Le Doeuff, *The Annual Marry Wollstonecraft Public Lecture: Marry In The Twenty First Century* (UK: University of The Hull, 2017), 11.
30. Marry Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication Of the Right Of Woman* (New York: Penguin) 40, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>

31. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 184.
32. Ibid.,
33. Lynn Nottage, *Ruined Study Guide*. (London: Almeida Projects, 2010), 17.
34. Lynn Nottage (2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010)8.
35. Ibid., 12.
36. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of the rights of woman* (New York: Penguin) 21, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
37. Lynn Nottage, *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 29.
38. Ibid., 55.
39. Ibid., 57.
40. Dr. Fatih Duman, “The Roots of Modern Feminism: Mary Wollstonecraft and The French Revolution”, *International Journal of Humanities and social sciences*. Hititi University: department of politics Turkey2, No. 9 (2012): 81, Accessed on April 2, 2017. http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/vol_No_9_may_2012.pdf
41. Lynn Nottage(2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 67.
42. Ibid., 45.
43. Ibid., 34.
44. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (New York: Penguin) 10, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
45. Lynn Nottage (2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 9-10.

Chapter two: Women's Right to Equality

To remove the barrier of social progress and shape a new order of institution, women in common with men ought to sit side by side with their same intellectual capabilities as a path to gender equality. Women's claim for their right is included in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Mary Wollstonecraft seeks to transcend women's natural position, fight the belief that render them subordinate, and demand equal access to the public sphere.

Equality in education is a central element in the feminist movement to obtain and secure liberty of expression as well as the same opportunities for the both sexes. The appropriate system of knowledge acquisition must be provided for young girls to ensure safe and supportive environment where they can become empowered as active members for reconstruction; their dignity, ambitions and seeking for emancipation need to be respected. In addition, the moral qualities and behavior of those naïve creatures must be evaluated.

This chapter is divided into two parts starting with education as the resolution for the unnatural inequity towards femininity, and the reformation of female manners. It is the revolution or the improvement of attitudes that should be taken into consideration to the extent that they use their distinctiveness from men to show their capacities.

1- Education

Mary Wollstonecraft accomplished the writing of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* to outrage the issue of gender inequality and support women's right mainly in the English society. She challenged the male world in order to free every woman from subordination since the two sexes are created by God as equal human beings. She asserts that "This discussion naturally divides the subject. I shall first consider women in the grand light

of human creatures, who, in common with men, are placed on this earth to unfold their faculties; and afterwards I shall more particularly point out their peculiar designation.”⁴⁶

Wollstonecraft supposed that the females are only educated to become slave, growing up dependent to the superior sex and being mostly “inferiors”. This is clearly shown in Eliche Amadi’s *The Concubine* where most of the female characters are dependent on their husbands and fathers. Despite the fact that Ihuoma is presented as an idol, respectful and even a virtuous lady, she is seen by some villagers as the other because of her widowhood. Generally, widows in the African society are victims of stereotypes and weird prejudices where they are viewed as the weaker sex in the whole society. In this sense, it is argued that,

Widows in Africa have told bizarre stories of their experiences in the hands of their in laws, friends and society at large. These stories often border victimization and betrayal. The experiences are traumatic and damaging to the feminine psyche. They are also gross examples of violation of women’s fundamental human rights and indictment of the society which view women as the ‘other’.⁴⁷

According to what is claimed above, Ihuoma as a young widow witnessed some troubles by Madume, the one who is considered as the main cause of Emenike’s death after their quarrel in the very beginning of the novel. He admires Ihuoma and wishes her to be his second wife because she still young and beautiful as well. Madume, then, attempts to seduce her as it is noticed,

“Put it down, I say” he moved towards her, a nasty smile on his face. Ihuoma put down the basket quietly, removed the plantain and began to move away. Only a very foolish woman would try to struggle with a man. As she turned her back on him, she felt a grip on her arm and turned to face him, her chest and breast heaving in anger, unable to speak. Her assailant spoke.⁴⁸

In addition, Madume’s wife is another victim of such illegal and violent husband who desires another wife; he does not take into consideration the sorrow of Wolu and his daughters. In fact, Madume wants to remarry in order to have a boy inheriting his name. He says,

‘An old woman likes you out to be ashamed of crying for no cause.’
‘Was it because I talked of getting another wife?’
She blew her nose and began to wipe her eyes.
‘Look here, some men in my age-group have two wives, others three. I don’t see why you to kill yourself at the mere mention of second wife’
‘That is not why I am crying, my lord’
‘It is. What else can it be?’
‘It is the way you keep talking of my children as if they aren’t yours. If they were boys you would regarded them as your children, I am sure. I am not Chineke; I do not create children.’⁴⁹

We deduce that the lack of education and ignorance led to this unfair treatment towards women. For that reason, Wollstonecraft advocates equal rights for the both sexes within a male-dominated culture, always claiming that women are as rational and reasonable. As a result, she believes that they have the same faculties as men, so they need to achieve gender equality in whole world. She argues,

Contending for the rights of women, my main argument is built upon this simple principle, that if she be not prepared by education to become a companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue, for truth must be common to all, or it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice.⁵⁰

That is to say, women as human beings own reasonable capacities like their opposite sex so they must get the same educational system like them, “women remain ignorant and excluded from the public sphere, then one half of human species is enslaved by male dominance”⁵¹

Moreover, there is an essential female character presented by Elichi Amadi who experiences the unfair decision of childhood engagement. It is Ahurole, who was betrothed at early age when she was only eight days,

Ahurole was engaged to Ekwueme when she was eight days old, Ekwueme was then about five years old. The initial ceremony was simple. Ekwueme’s father, Wigwe, merely put some kola nuts and the shoots of young palm wine sapling into the vessel from which Ahurole drank.⁵²

The absence of education is merely the principle matter which makes women submit. It means that women are not thought to construct their lives but they are socially constructed. Hardly ever, traditions take part on imposing rules over the female world. For instance,

Ahurole who has been engaged at early age, she still acts in childish way when she got married Ekwueme. It is the reason why women are considered as beings not mature by their husbands. Marry Wollstonecraft asserts that, “When they marry they act as such children maybe expected to act: they dress, they paint and nickname god’s creatures.”⁵³ They are considered as fools who are mainly marginalized by men with less value; however, it is society that makes such women weak and irrational beings.

In a different way, Ihuoma, the heroine, behaves unlike the other female characters. She is a wise woman who behaves in a clever way; all the villagers appreciate and show great respect to her. That is to say, she uses her mind to fix things. She also gives some advice to the inhabitant of her village as Ekwueme requests,

‘How is Ahurole? I am sorry I haven’t called on her for so long.’
‘Try and call her and see if you can advise her too’
‘Advise her?’

Ihuoma sensed what was coming. Like every other villager, she knew about Ekwueme’s quarrels with his wife. She would very much have liked to advise Ahurole, particularly as they were both from the same village, but past events made it impossible for her to do so. She knew that Ekwueme’s feelings for her were as strong as ever and she tried to avoid rousing them. How could she who was reputed to be one of the best women in Omokachi sow the seeds of confusion between the young man and his wife? ⁵⁴

Besides, Ihuoma’s wisdom and intelligence are revealed clearly in her conversation with Ekwueme’s father when he asks her to marry his son,

‘Dede’, Ihuoma replied steadily, ‘I thank you for this proposal. It is a good one, but I cannot accept it because I want to stay in my late husband’s compound and bring up his children to carry his name. I hope Ekwe will not take it ill and that he will find a good to marry soon.’

Of course. Wigwe did not accept anything else. He did not try to persuade her. That would be over acting. Biding her good morrow he and his son roused to go.⁵⁵

Finally, Ihuoma is reasonable and intelligent enough to fit in Marry Wollstonecraft’s claim that women possess the faculty of reasoning but unfortunately cultural traditions and male dominance system make them submissive to patriarchy.

In *Ruined*, the playwright has demonstrated women as victims of ravishment in which man uses their bodies as a source of exploitation. In fact, the play centers on the life of those women working on the bar trying to survive despite the cruel acts they have experienced; for instance, most of the female characters have been sexually violated at an early ages such as Mama Nadi, the heroine, Sophie and Salima. They have no force to defend themselves from the brutality of the soldiers who are the main cause of their destruction since the society did not allow women to react against the way men treat them. Consequently, they are deprived from independence and are kept under man's control. Even though women are born free as human beings, they find themselves subservient and obedient to the orders of society where the superior sex has the role of the oppressor and the exploiter while the inferior one is mainly the purpose of the former's desires. For more illustration, Mary Wollstonecraft calls for equality between the two sexes to end the battle of injustice towards her sex. She asserts,

Asserting the rights which women in common with men out to contend for, I have not attempted to extenuate their faults; but to prove that the natural consequence of their education and station in society. If so, it reasonable to suppose that they will change their character, and correct their vices and follies, when they are allowed to be free in the physical, moral, and civil sense. Let woman share the rights and she will emulate the virtues of man; for she must grow more perfect when unanticipated.⁵⁶

The above quotation explores the changes that should be followed in order to free women from obscurity and they must share the same rights as men through the adequate educational system to correct the wrong ideas which destroy the female world.

Within the play, Mama Nadi presents the image of the real life of a Congolese woman during the civil war of the democratic republic of Congo. She owns the brothel where she runs a business with some men particularly Christian, the business man who imports goods for Mama like lipstick, bears, chocolate. Her bar receives a lot of visitors especially the militia. Soldiers come to drink, dance with women, and feed their desires; therefore, Mama Nadi has

the ability to reach her goal and resist the order of the society since she is responsible, intelligent and outstanding in business. She frequently uses proverbs in her speech with others that are mainly wise sayings to express her clever thoughts. Despite the fact that she has a dark and gloomy past, she has become strong and wise enough to withstand fear and able to endure hardship and pain. She says:

Mama: ... if you don't step on the dogs tails, they won't bite you.⁵⁷

Mama: ... there must always be a part of you that this war can't touch.⁵⁸

Mama: ... careful of the cold rain it carries more men to their death than a storm of arrows.⁵⁹

As *Ruined* is a story of women in Congo first and foremost, Lynn Nottage stresses on the inner sufferings of Sophie and Salima. The soldiers violated them without paying attention to their feelings as human beings but as animals. Their experience with men has spoiled their chance to find the ideal ones who deserve their values as well as to protect them under their roofs. Indeed, they accept the unethical behavior of the patriarchal society which determines them as weak and artificial because they have no support either from their families, members of society or their husbands. Lack of security is mainly the reason that led such young women to work as prostitutes to gain livelihood. Thus, the use of their bodies is a means for survival to get a comfortable life based on eating and dressing without regard to their existence as women, to what they think or what they want. In the play, the soldiers have left cicatrix inside the victims who have a deep sorrow in their soul. From this aspect, Sophie and Salima express their sadness in a conversation,

Sophie: I am sorry, but you know it is true. There is a war going on, and it isn't safe for a woman alone. You know this! It's better this way here.

Salima: you, you don't have to be with them. Sometimes their hands are so full of rage that it hurts to be touched. This night, I look over at your singing, and you seem almost happy like a sunbird that can fly away if you reach out to touch it.

Sophie: is that what you think? While I'm singing, I'm praying the pain will be gone, but those men did to me lives inside of my body. Every step I take, I feel them in me. Punishing me. And it will be that way for the rest of my life. (Salima touches Sophie's face.)

Salima: I'm pregnant

Sophie: what?

Salima: I'm pregnant. I can't tell mama. (Tears fill her eyes. Sophie hugs Salima)⁶⁰

From what is said, one can clearly notice the situation in which the girls are put. They carry out their considerable difficulties for their own and silently.

Accordingly, in the real life, the masculine world has always the authority whereas the feminine is harshly dominated. Man occupies the first position in society as the leader. He is the essential subject and is mainly associated with creativity and positive values while women are identified as inessential, an object to man, and irrational. Following this idea, Mary Wollstonecraft tends to prove the opposite of these prejudices that reduce women to be the other. She argues,

Chastity, modesty, public spirit, and all the noble train of virtues, on which social virtue and happiness are built, should be understood and cultivated by all mankind, or they will be cultivated to little effect. And, instead of furnishing the vicious or idle with a pretext for violating some sacred duty by terming it a sexual one, it would be wiser to show that nature has not made any difference, for that the unchaste man doubly defeats the purpose of nature, by rendering women barren...⁶¹

The two sexes are created by God who gave them same positive qualities in nature; however, man tries to exclude woman from the highest social standing to render her inferior to him. As a result, Wollstonecraft contributed to change the status of woman through gaining access to equal education as she maintains in her vindication: "In short, in whatever light I view the subject reason and experience convince me that the only method of leading women to fulfill their peculiar duties is to free from all restraint by allowing them to participate in the inherent right of mankind."⁶² Thus, she insisted on the importance of women's ability to challenge the norms in society.

To get rid of the inequality made by society, the main rescue is the same knowledge acquisition of the both sexes. Gender differences are rooted back to the lack of education throughout the patriarchal customs and traditions. For a longtime, women were condemned to

bear the second position without receiving the process of learning even though they possess their own intelligent capacities to confront the obstacles they face in their daily life. Mama Nadi gained her status in society due to her wisdom. This fact empowers her to overthrow men's power and win total respect from them, particularly soldiers.

In *Ruined*, Sophie has the opportunity of being an educated woman; she is a good student and prepares herself to enter the university exam. However, the militia destroyed her innocence and ambition in life. They have caused her suffering and pain.

MAMA. Are you a student?
SOPHIE. Yes, I was to sit for the university exams
MAMA. I bet you were a good at your studies, am I right?
SOPHIE. Yes.⁶³

To add, Sophie is very beautiful and soft; she sings very well and attracts most of the men in the bar. Mama Nadi trusts on her and permits her to count money. As it is mentioned in the play,

MAMA. you sing?
SOPHIE.(softly.)yes
MAMA. Do you know any popular songs?
SOPHIE. Yes, a few.⁶⁴

With Sophie's songs and sweet voice the brothel has many guests, and thanks to her prettiness The business runs in a very excellent way. It is significant to mention that through education women have the ability to build their personalities and improve their faculties to be independent from the cell of patriarchal system. Unfortunately, Sophie is mostly victim of rape. Men mistreat her as a slave and as an object which feeds their desires. Through analyzing the character Sophie, one can observe that she is a cultivated girl, who is fond of reading books,

SOPHIE. (Reading.) "The others had left the party, they were alone. She was no painfully aware that was only the kiss left between them. She left herself stiffen as he leaned into her. The chains on her forearms stood an end, and the room suddenly grew several degrees warmer."⁶⁵

Sophie is the best of well taught woman in the play and the one who uses her mind in order to solve her problems. She seeks to leave the brothel by repairing her genital organ caused by the savage militia. She is, in fact, the main girl who attempts to bring light to the ruined girls.

1- Reformation of Female Manners:

In her treatise, Mary Wollstonecraft admitted that “it is time to effect a revolution in female manners- time to restore to them their lost dignity, and make them, as a part of human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.”⁶⁶ that is to say it is high time for women to change their negative attitudes which have been thought by their ancestors as well as to reform their manners not to be dependent on men. To achieve this, women should be less sensitive and maintain or construct their arguments with reason. Their feminine manners such as an exaggerated caring for their beauty maintain their subordination and submission, which turns them into imperfect beings and slaves to men’s appetites.

The Concubine portrays a traditional society under a male-dominated system. Elichi Amadi presents a culture that subordinates women to men as their lords whenever they address their husbands. Women’s main objective is to serve, to satisfy and to please them. In turn, men never reciprocate this kindness, for they refer to their wives as fools without any value. This fact signifies that women are placed in low position; for instance, Ihuoma’s father has clearly asserted that her child should be raised with a man in order not to behave like a woman when he grows,

‘Stop talking, Nwonna,’ Ogboji said, ‘you are eating, Ihuoma is this how your are bringing them up?’

‘Nwonna, he does not listen to me’

‘Is that true, Nwonna? They will come to live with me next year; you will behave like a woman if you are brought up by a woman.’
 ‘As if all women are fools,’ Okachi retorted
 ‘Well, many of you are,’ her husband replied.
 ‘My lord, some men are more foolish than women’
 ‘Keep quiet, woman, and eat.’
 ‘I am sorry, my lord.’⁶⁷

It suggests the unfair description of women, for they are incapable to be responsible of growing up children alone. In this case, Ogbuji doubts Ihuoma’s ability to be the educator of her kids while he is the one who must make his daughter confident of herself. ‘Make women rational creatures, and free citizens, and they quickly become good wives and mothers’⁶⁸. Thus, Mary Wollstonecraft addresses her claim to men rather than women since the latter is not educated so instead of rendering them weak and ignorant, men should free them first to get the same right. She affirms that, ‘to render women truly useful members of society, I argue that they should be led by having their understandings cultivated on large scale, to acquire a rational affection for their country.’⁶⁹

In the very beginning of the novel, Ihuoma and her husband enjoy good marriage. They respect each other and their relationship is mainly based on friendship. It is seen that Ihuoma has been so anxious when her dead husband was ill. She has neglected herself to think only about Ennike’s health.

Nnenda, a neighbour’s wife, sauntered in.
 ‘Ihuoma,’ she greeted.
 ‘Nnenda, Ihuoma replied.
 ‘I have come to ask you to plait my hair next Eke. I hope you will have the time.’
 ‘I believe I will,’ Ihuoma said, ‘and maybe you would plait mine as well. My hair is almost like that of a madwoman now.’
 ‘Ah but, Ihuoma, you are not to blame. How could you have the heart to plait your hair when your husband was lying critically ill?’
 ‘Indeed, I am so happy he is better now. I was afraid he might die,’ Ihuoma said.⁷⁰

Wollstonecraft in her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* wished to realize equality between the two sexes. The authoress persuades women to control over themselves but not over their husbands and encourages them to focus on their rational accomplishment rather

than on their beauty. She declares that, ‘ besides the woman who strengthens her body and exercises her mind will, by managing her family and practicing various virtues, become the friend, and the humble dependent of her husband’⁷¹. As a result, she insists to prepare women to be companions to men for the progress of knowledge so that men should come to their aid. For her, the secret of a successful living is that man must give importance to woman through treating her as human being who needs caring.

In another hand, Madumes’s relationship with his wife is filled with conflict and misunderstanding. He seeks another wife by asking Wolu to go beyond Ihuoma for the purpose of marriage. Madume says:

‘Wolu: you will run a little errand for me,’ he announced at last.
‘Willingly my lord!’
‘You will bear a message to Ihuoma.’
Wolu looked down feeling confused; she did not to be told. His tone had given a way the nature of the message. She kept quite.
‘You heard me?’
‘Yes my lord.’
‘And will you do it?’
‘If I can.’
‘I am sure you can.’
She was quite
‘Well, it’s just this: I want to begin to be nice to her. If things turn out well, I shall marry her.’⁷²

How can a woman accept to choose a wife for her husband? Madume thinks highly of himself; consequently, God has punished him to become a blind man when the Cobra spits in his eyes. Despite the fact that he has hurt Wolu’s feelings, she worried about her husband’s blindness and quickly sends for the medicine man, Anayka. Despite all what she has experienced with him, she tries to be beside him in such hard situation. ‘She realized the humiliation her husband suffered over such matter.’⁷³ However, Madume scares all his family with strange attitudes attempting to beat his wife with a stick. Thus, she decides to leave him alone because of his rigorous behavior. She runs away saying to him:

'I am going to my parents, my lord.'
'Because I am blind?'
'No, my lord.'
'What are your reasons?'
'You are planning to kill me.'
'Come back Wolu, I shall not hurt you.'
'I must see my parents first.'
'Who will look after me while you are away?'
'I shall be back soon, but my parents must know the situation of things.'
'Don't you pity me?'
'I do, it is your fault that I'm going on.'⁷⁴

From the conversation above, one can notice that Madume as a male is the perfect model of a dominant man who commands his wife as a slave. In this light, Wollstonecraft adds that, "women are, in common with men, rendered weak and luxurious by relaxing pleasure which wealth procures; but added to this they are made slaves to their persons, and must render them alluring that man may lend them his reason to guide his reason to their tottering steps aright."⁷⁵ Therefore, a woman has the possibility to change the superficial law of man's authority and the inferiority imposed on her by society through education and distance from emotions/sentiments.

Many writers like Jean Jack Rousseau and Dr Gregory in Wollstonecraft's time have claimed that women's education should focus on how to please men with their attractive appearances and neglect totally the notion of cultivating themselves with too much reading and studying. For Wollstonecraft, this kind of education makes women superficial. Their ignorance conducts them to be the object of lust. Wollstonecraft in '*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*' women have to distance themselves from ignorance and lack of education. By arguing in this way, Wollstonecraft centralized her arguments on the fact that women should not be influenced by their feelings/sentiments which make them slaves, but they must avoid intentionally the use of their bodies for men's sexual desires. In this respect she says,

A king is always a king, woman is always a woman, his authority and her sex, ever stand between them, and rational converse with a lover I grant, she should be so, and her sensibility will naturally lead her to endeavour to exit emotion, not to gratify her vanity, but her heart. This I do not allow to be conquest, it is the artless impulse of nature, I only exclaim against the sexual desire of conquest when the heart is out question.⁷⁶

We may notice that if women are not interested only in sexuality, they will not be obedient and dominated by men. Men in Nottage's work are viewed as rapists who consider women as concubines while Congolese women exist only to be prostitutes to those who damaged them.

At the bar, the sexual pleasure is the only way to survive. Thus, the girls' job is to take care of their looks; they should dress, make up, and dance for the soldiers who caused brutality and crimes against them. In fact, their physical appearance is a mean for survival. Mama Nadi attitudes are a mixture of a grid and kindness; she almost rejects her soft emotions to build herself as independent as man.

Salima bitterly enslaved without any mercy is seen as an animal, not a human being. She recounts what happened to her when the savages creatures kidnapped her and killing her baby Beatrice that same day. She says,

Salima: one of the soldiers held me down with his foot. He was so heavy, thick like an ox and his boot was cracked and weathered like I had been left out in the rain for weeks. His boot was pressing my chest and cracks in the leather had the look of drying sorghum. His foot was so heavy and it was all I could see, as the others... "Took" me. My baby was crying. She was a good baby. She never cried, but she was crying screaming. "Shhh," I said. "Shhh," and right then (Salima closes her eyes.) A soldier stomped on her head with his boot. And she was quiet. (A moment she releases.) Where was everybody? WHERE WAS EVERYBODY? (Sophie hugs Salima).⁷⁷

Within the play, Salima returns to her family but they turned their back on her face, particularly her husband Fortune who sees her dishonor. It is noticeable that the African ruined girls are rejected instead of protecting and saving them.

After such a terrible event, Mama Nadi is the rescuer of Salima who finds refuge at Mama's brothel where she has to serve the soldiers. Thus, Mama Nadi gives her a safe place to live in. Despite the fact that Fortune comes to the bar searching his wife for forgiveness, he confesses his love and regret, Mama Nadi tells him that no one heard of such girl. We have found also that Salima refuses to talk a even to meet him since he dared to left her dead. He did not feel her pain when the savage soldiers had violated her. Therefore, it is the right time to make this man regret and feel shame for what he has done to his innocent wife. From our analysis, we see that woman ought to strengthen her behavior and manners in order to get her legal rights that are ignored by her opposite sex. Salima overcomes her feelings through supporting her thoughts with logic. She learned that if she returns to him, her life will turn worse again because a man who does not understand the violation of his wife, he can never protect her as she discusses with Sofie,

Sophie. You can't know until you speak to him

Salima. I walked into the family compound expecting wide open arms. An embrace. Five months suffering. I suffered every single of it. And my family gave me the back of their heads. And he, the man I loved since I was fourteen, chased me away with a green switch. He beat my ankles raw. And I dishonored him? I dishonored him? Where was he? Buying a pot? He was too proud to bear my shame, but not proud enough to protect me from it. Let him sit in the rain.

Sophie. Is that really what you want?

Salima. Yes

Sophie. He is going to leave

Salima. Then I am sorry for him. (Light shifts to moonlight) ⁷⁸

At the end of the novel, Salima has committed suicide to break out from the battle she lived inside her, bearing pain and shame. She surrenders herself to rescue from cold-blooded men who transformed her life into hell. She says in her last breath to all the men around her you will not fight your battle in my body anymore⁷⁹. And she dies in Fortune's arms as retribution to him.

According to Wollstonecraft, marriage should not be based on the relationship of master and slave but rather as friends that comprehend each other in order to build equilibrium inside the family. . If this awareness is realized, there won't be a violation of women's basic rights to life, liberty and human dignity mainly to gain equality as free citizens. She confirms,

Personal attachment in a very happy foundation for friendship; yet, when even two virtuous young people marry, it would perhaps, be happy if some circumstances checked their passion, if the recollection of some prior attachment, or disappointed affection, made it on one side, at least, rather a match founded on esteem. In that case they would beyond the present moment, and try to render the whole of life respectable by forming a plan to regulate a friendship which only death ought to dissolve.⁸⁰

As a conclusion for this chapter, the reformation of female manners could be improved if women's reason would afford sufficient education to recruit in different domains. In *The concubine* (1966) and *Ruined* (2007), almost all the female characters have experienced the mistreatments which led them to be as slaves and obedient to the traditional rules of the African world; however, they could eliminate this fact since they are capable to ameliorate their lower and constructed status.

End notes:

46. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of woman* (New York: Penguin)9, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
47. Simon. E. D, and Obten. M. I, "Widowhood and Conflict Resolution in Select African Novels", *International Journal of humanities and social sciences* 2, No. 15 (2016): 260, Accessed on April 25, 2017. <http://www.ijsshr.com/journals/idex.Php/IJSSHR/articals/download>.
48. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 68.
49. Ibid., 56.
50. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication of the Right of women* (New York: Penguin) 3, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
51. Michele le Doeuf, *The Annual Marry Wollstonecraft Public Lecture: Mary in the Twentey First Century* (UK: the university of the hull, 2017), 11.
52. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 98; 99.

53. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication of the Rights of woman* (New York: Penguin) 9, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
54. Elichi Amadi, *The concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 147-148.
55. Ibid., 113.
56. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication of the Right of woman* (New York: Penguin) 206, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
57. Lynn Nottage (2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 33.
58. Ibid., 36.
59. Ibid., 47.
60. Ibid., 22-33.
61. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication of the Right of woman* (New York: Penguin) 147, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
62. Ibid., 186.
63. Lynn Nottage (2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 12.
64. Ibid., 12.
65. Ibid., 34.
66. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *The Vindication of the Right of woman* (New York: Penguin) 47, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
67. Elichi Amadi, *The Concubine* (London: hienemann, 1966), 39.
68. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman* (New York: Penguin) 189, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
69. Ibid; 204
70. Elichi Amadi, *The Concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 11.
71. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman*, (New York: Penguin, 2004) 29, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
72. Amadi, Elichi. *The Concubine* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 54-55.
73. Ibid., 72.
74. Ibid., 74.
75. Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman* (New York: Penguin) 153, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>
76. Ibid., 60.
77. Lynn Nottage (2007) *Ruined* (New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010) 48.
78. Ibid., 46.
79. Ibid., 63.

- ⁸⁰. Marry Wollstonecraft (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of woman* (New York: Penguin) 77, Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>

General Conclusion

From all what has been discussed, we come to conclude that the issue of gender distinction in the African space is shared in the two works by Elich Amadi and Lynn Nottage. In *The Concubine* and *Ruined*, women experienced the same lifestyle of hierarchy, of an excessive authority over them. Thus, we noticed that the problematic of the withheld subjectivity of women is overwhelmingly dominant inside these two literary works.

Relying on Mary Wollstonecraft's influential essay entitled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792); we have discussed the question of women's subordination and their reaction to the masculine power, which consisted of refusing all kinds of segregation whether moral or phys. Indeed, Elich Amadi has displayed in *The Concubine* (1966) the effect of traditional rules in leading women to allegiance. In the other hand, Lynn Nottage highlights the manner in which men destroy their opposite sex in ways very often savage.

In addition, it has been examined that the perfect solution to end sexism was the rational education for the both sexes so as to perfect their virtues and develop their reason and enable them to get more independence. Thus, education enlightens female's mind that would improve their capacities, take part in the public sphere as well as make society flourish. Obviously, Lynn Nottage in her play *Ruined* depicts the notions of reasonable thoughts in her major characters. In *The Concubine*, Elich Amadi has focused on the way women are conducted by the social traditions; therefore, we have based on the females' cleverness as a crucial matter.

In short, women's deep desire for liberty and emancipation should be heard in the whole world in order to create social equilibrium and full peace. We have tried to find certain similarities concerning women's capability to challenge men and the right to equal education in the African society illustrating the literary works: Elich Amadi's *The Concubine* and Lynn

Nottage's *Ruined*. Following this path, we invite other researchers to be interested in the rights of women to develop different literary works.

Bibliography

Primary sources

- Amadi, Elichi. *The concubine*, London: Heinemann, 1966.
- Nottage, Lynn. (2007), *Ruined*, New York: Dramatists play service, INC, 2010.
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. (1792) *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman*, New York: Penguin, 2004. Accessed on March 30, 2017. <http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/vindicat.pdf>.

Secondary sources

- Astell, Mary (1700) Some Reflection upon Marriage. Accessed on September 30, 2017. <http://faculty.goucher.edu/eng211/maryastel.htm>
- Duman, Fatih. "The Roots of Modern Feminism: Mary Wollstonecraft and the French Revolution". *International Journal of Humanities and social sciences* 2, no. 9(2012): 81-82. Accessed on April 2, 2017. http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/vol_No_9_may_2012.pdf.
- E.D, Simone and M.I, Obten. "Widowhood and Conflict Resolution in Select African Novels". *International Journal of Humanities and Social sciences* 2, no. 15(2016):260- 265. Accessed on April 25, 2017. <http://www.ijsshr.com/journals/index.php/IJSSHR/articals/download>.
- Eldred Durosimi, Jones, et al, eds. *Oral and Written Poetry in African Literature Today*, London: James Curry, 1988.
- Gariti, Mohammed. *Feminism in Britain: From William Shakespeare to Mary Wollstonecraft*, Tizi Ouzou: University of Mouloud Mammeri, 2012.

- Hooks, Bell. *Feminism for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, Cambridge: South End press, 2000.
- Le Deouff, Michelle. *The Annual Marry Wollstonecraft Public Lecture: Marry in the Twenty First Century*, UK: University of the Hull, 2017.
- Mendez Garcia, Carmen. *This is my place, Mama Nadi's: Feminine space and identity in Lynn Nottage's Ruined*, Spain: University of Madrid, 2012. Accessed on April 19, 2017. <http://eprints.ucm.es/32495/1/41141-55705-2-PB.pdf>.
- Messiah, Isaac. "Myths and Realities: A study of Elichi Amadi's The Concubine". *Journal of Humanistic and Social studies* 2, no. 1(2011): 120- 121. Accessed on September 10, 2017. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/messages/downloadsexceeded.html>.
- Nottage, Lynn. *Ruined Study Guide*, London: Almeida Projects, 2010.
- Nymndi, George D. "Elichi Amadi's Women: voices of Reason". *Nordic Journal of African studies* 13, no.2 (2004): 218-219. Accessed on June 13, 2017. www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol13num2/nyamndi.pdf
- O. Ogbeide, Victor. *Cultural Innocence ,commitment and Education in Elichi Amadi's The Concubine and The Great Ponds* 5, no 1(2011): 29-39
- Schipper, Mineke. "Mother Africa on a Pedestal: the Male Heritage in African Literature and Criticism". In *Women in African Literature Today*, edited by Jones Eldred Durosimi, et al, 37-46, UK: Lightning source UK Ltd, 2002.
- Tayzer, Alice P. *Gender and Development the Role of Religion and culture: The Rationship between Religion, Culture, Gender and Development*, Makerere University, 2007.
- Walters, Margaret. *Feminism a Very Short Introduction*, New York: oxford university press, 2005.

- Wollstom. *Violence against Women in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*, Belgium, 2000. Accessed on September 15, 2017. https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/.../ituc_violence_rdc_eng_lr.pdf.

Websites

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Vindication_of_the_Rights_of_Woman
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/feminism>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruined_\(play\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruined_(play))
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Concubine_\(Novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Concubine_(Novel)).